


Crown of Thorns



STORY & ART BY
Yoko Kamio

1



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1

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Even as
a child, I
never liked
heroes.

My heart
went out
instead to
the dark
lords they
vanquished...

... and the
hideous
monsters
they slew.

FUKAMI!

FUKAMI!
HELLO?

NOBARA
FUKAMI!

case
1

神尾葉子

YOKO KAMIO

CROWN
OF
THORNS





YEAH.

HEY, FUKAMI,
IS IT TRUE
THAT YOU
LIVE IN THAT
OLD MANSION
ACROSS THE
RIVER?



D-
DEAD...?

IT WAS
A MURDER-
SUICIDE,
BROUGHT ON
BY CRUSHING
DEBT. I'M ALL
THAT'S LEFT
OF THE
FAMILY.



AREN'T YOU
SCARED?
THAT PLACE
SEEMS LIKE
IT'D BE, LIKE,
HAUNTED OR
SOMETHING.

AND WHY
JUST YOU?
WHERE
ARE YOUR
PARENTS?

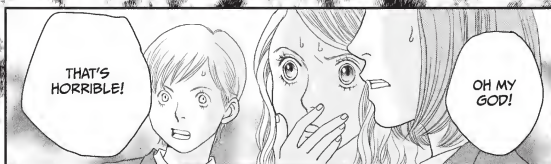
DEAD.



WHOA,
THAT'S
INSANE!

YOU
REALLY
LIVE
THERE
ALL BY
YOUR-
SELF?

YEP.



THAT'S
HORRIBLE!

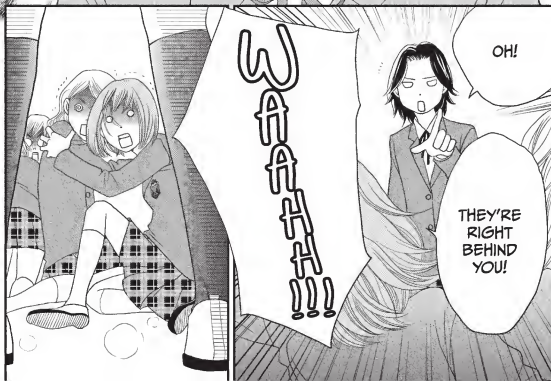
OH MY
GOD!



BUT I'M
NOT
LONELY.

---AS
GHOSTS.

THEY
VISIT ME
EVERY
DAY...



W
A
A
A
A
A
!!!

OH!

THEY'RE
RIGHT
BEHIND
YOU!



WE ONLY
TALKED
TO YOU
BECAUSE
YOU DON'T
HAVE ANY
FRIENDS!

WHAT'S
YOUR
DEAL?

NOBARA
MEANS
"WILD
ROSE,"
RIGHT?
WHAT A
JOKE!



MORONS!



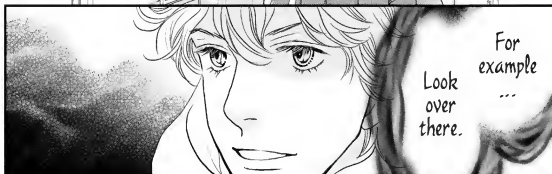
YOU'RE
NOTHING
BUT
THORNS!

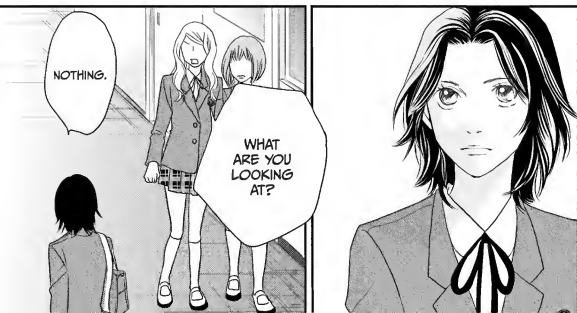
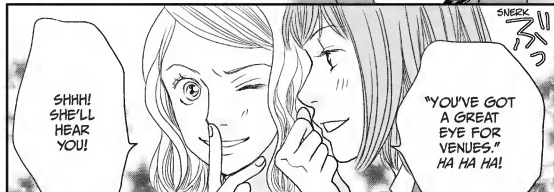
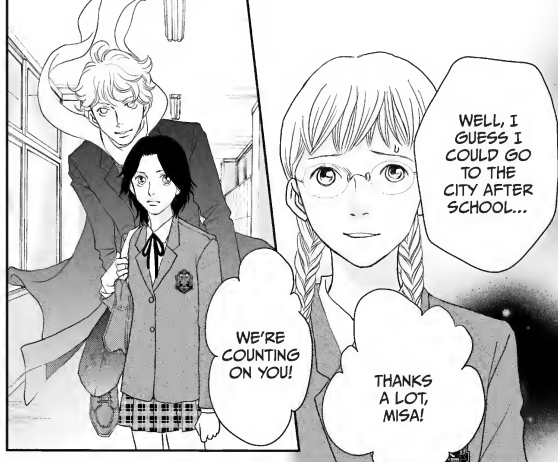


HMPH!

THAT
WAS
ALL A
LIE?



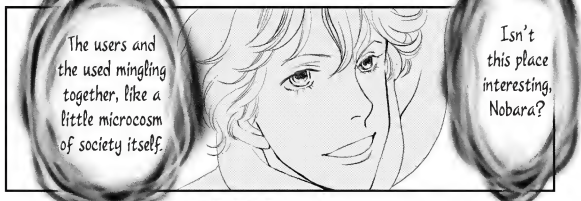






THAT GIRL
CREEPS ME
OUT.

SOMETIMES I
SEE HER, LIKE,
TALKING TO
HERSELF.



The users and
the used mingling
together, like a
little microcosm
of society itself.

Isn't
this place
interesting,
Nobara?



You'll find
out soon
enough.

He's
gone.



WHO ARE
YOU?

WHY ARE YOU
FOLLOWING
ME?

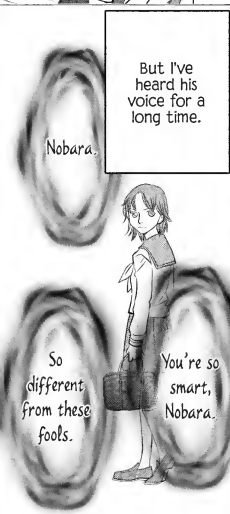


OPEN YOUR
BOOKS TO
PAGE 80.

WHO'S THAT
STANDING
BEHIND YOU,
KICHIKO?

He first
appeared...

... about
three
months
ago.



But I've
heard his
voice for a
long time.

Nobara.

So
different
from these
fools.

You're so
smart,
Nobara.



I'm never
playing with
you again,
Nobara!

あんなに
おもしろ
いって
おもっ
たのば
かぢん
と

BUHAHAHA!

I'M
SCARED
!



IN THAT
GIANT MASK...

I've seen
things that
other people
can't since I
was a child.

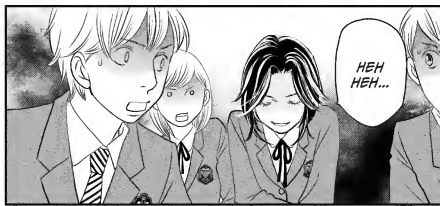
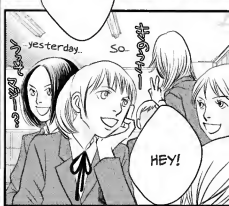


If aliens landed
...

... and
razed the school...



"Interesting?"
This place
could not be
more boring.



Now that
would be
interesting.



BLAH

BLAH





Hmmm...
Maybe my
imagination is
just giving him a
physical form?



ARE
YOU STILL
LIVING
HERE
ALONE
?

YEP.

WHERE
ARE YOUR
PARENTS
AGAIN?
OSAKA?



I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT
DOESN'T
SCARE YOU
TO LIVE
HERE.

Man,
those
vines!

HUH...

SOMEONE
AT SCHOOL
TODAY
THOUGHT
IT WAS
HAUNTED.



OH.

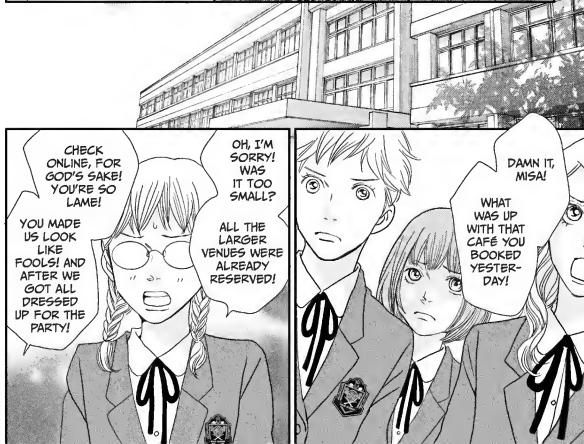
HENMI.

I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU
IN A LONG
TIME.



HEY!

IT'S
FUKAMI.





OH!

QUICK,
LOOK!

IT'S
YOSHIKAWA!



SORRY
...

I'LL TRY
HARDER
NEXT
TIME!

FINE. YOU
CAN REDEEM
YOURSELF
ON THE NEXT
ONE.



SO WHEN'S
YOUR NEXT
BASKETBALL
GAME?

OH...

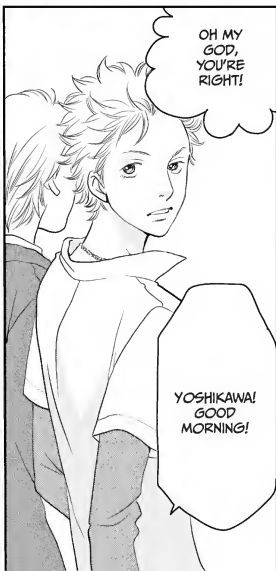
HEY
THERE.



MISA,
DO ME A
FAVOR.

TAKE
THE CLASS
JOURNAL TO
THE TEACHER'S
LOUNGE FOR
ME.

WOMP



OH MY
GOD,
YOU'RE
RIGHT!

YOSHIKAWA!
GOOD
MORNING!

Go
talk to
that
girl.

I
assure you,
something
entertaining
will happen!

Well?

You are
bored,
aren't
you?

What's
caught
your eye,
Nobara?
Are you
concerned
?

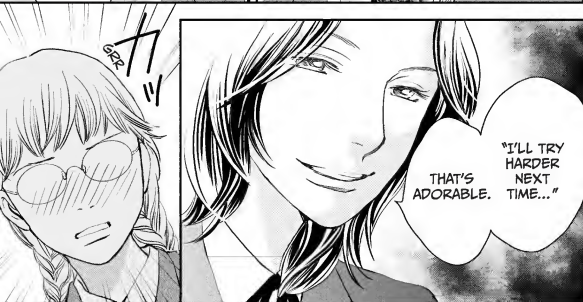
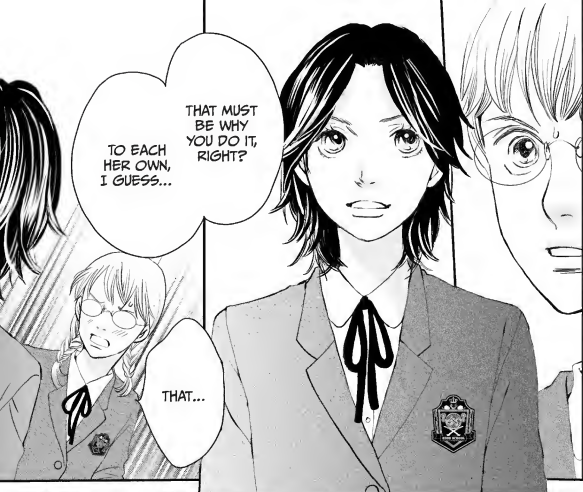
NOT
REALLY.

"Something
entertaining"...?

21
JUL

DO YOU
ENJOY
SERVING
OTHERS?

TELL
ME...





YOU'RE
RIGHT, I
WOULDN'T
KNOW...

...WHAT
IT'S LIKE
TO BE
A BIT
PLAYER.

"A BIT
PLAYER"...?



FUKA...

"FUKAMI, YOU
WOULDN'T
UNDERSTAND!"



IS THAT
IT?



I'd hate
to see you
turn into a
good person,
Nobara.

What's
this?

Don't tell me
you're trying
to save her?



WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?!

WHAT
...?

THAT IS
NOT GONNA
HAPPEN,
DUMBASS.



FUKAMI,
YOU'RE
...

...A TOTAL
LONER!



DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

WAIT A
MINUTE!

WHAT
DID YOU
MEAN,
"BIT
PLAYER"
?



NOW,
SHOULDN'T
YOU GO
DELIVER THAT
JOURNAL?

YOU HAVE
YOUR
ORDERS,
PRIVATE.



FRIENDS
?

YOU THINK
THOSE
PEOPLE
ARE YOUR
FRIENDS?

I MAY BE A
LONER, BUT AT
LEAST I'M THE
STAR OF MY
OWN LIFE.





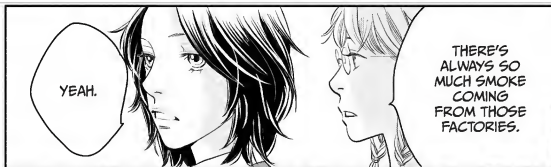
SURE.

GOOD
ENOUGH
FOR ME.



BECAUSE
...

...R-
REASONS.



YEAH.

THERE'S
ALWAYS SO
MUCH SMOKE
COMING
FROM THOSE
FACTORIES.



IT MAKES
ME FEEL SO
DRY, LIKE I'M
ABOUT TO
CHOKe.

THIS
CITY...

IT'S ALL
FACTORIES,
EVERYWHERE
YOU LOOK.
YOU BARELY
SEE ANY
GREEN.



AND
NOTHING
UNEXPECTED
WOULD EVER
HAPPEN TO
ME.

I'D MARRY
A DECENT,
NORMAL
GUY.

I FIGURED I'D
GET INTO A
DECENT LOCAL
COLLEGE, THEN
GET A JOB AT A
DECENT LOCAL
COMPANY.



WHAT
YOU SAID
EARLIER
...



SO MAKE
SOMETHING
HAPPEN.

DO
SOMETHING
UNEXPECTED.

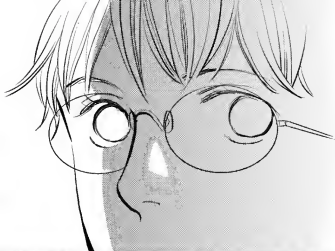
...ABOUT
ME BEING
A "BIT
PLAYER."
IT STRUCK
A NERVE.



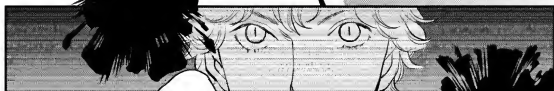
I'M GOING
TO SPEND
MY WHOLE
LIFE...

...BEING
A BIT
PLAYER.





What...



... am I
doing
?!

LIKE...

LIKE
WHAT?



THAT UPPER-
CLASSMAN
EARLIER...

MAKE HIM
YOURS.

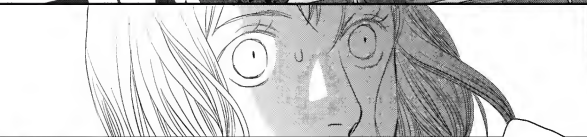






PUT ON
SOME
MAKEUP,
AND...

...TRY
TELLING HIM
YOU LIKE
HIM?



Huh?



FUKAMI,
YOU...

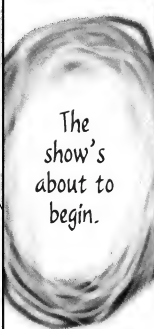
YOU'RE
SCARING
ME!

HOW CAN
YOU EVEN
SAY THINGS
LIKE THAT?



MISA!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?



The
show's
about to
begin.



What
did I
say... ?



IT'S NOT
LIKE YOU
TO CUT
CLASS.

I GOT
YELLED AT
CUZ IT WAS
MISSING!

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THE
JOURNAL?!
I TOLD YOU
TO DELIVER
IT, DIDN'T
I?!



I
can
hear
...

... him
whispering.



Well.

Do something unexpected.

WE'VE GOT SCIENCE NEXT, RIGHT?

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HIM.

HEY, LEMME BORROW YOUR LIP GLOSS.

UGH, BUT I'M SO TIRED...

So make something happen!

SORRY, I...

YOU NEED TO DO WHAT I TELL YOU TO, DAMN IT!

...as the star!

Recast yourself...

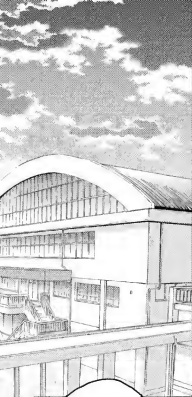
Make him yours.

SOOORRY.

MISA, I'VE GOT A DATE TODAY...

...SO COULD YOU DO CLEAN-UP DUTY FOR ME?





MAN, AM
I BEAT.

NICE
JOB
TODAY.



I DON'T
LIKE
THOSE
NOISY
ONES.

ALWAYS
SQUEALING
TOGETHER
IN THEIR
LITTLE
CLIQUE...

THERE'S
ALWAYS
A CROWD
FOR YOU,
YOSHIKAWA.

WONDER
IF THERE'LL
BE ANY
CUTE GIRLS
WAITING
AFTER
PRACTICE.

HI.

YOSHI-
KAWA
...

CAN
I...

...TELL
YOU
SOME-
THING
?

ROLL
ROLL



YOSHIKAWA
HAS A
GIRLFRIEND
...

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
THIS.

IT'S
THAT BITCH,
MISA!

SHE
PRETENDED
TO BE OUR
FRIEND TO
GET CLOSE
TO HIM!

SHE
PLAYED
ME!



"IT JUST
SORTA
HAPPENED."

LIKE IT
WAS
NO BIG
DEAL!

WHEN I
CONFRONTED
HER ABOUT IT
THIS MORNING,
DO YOU KNOW
WHAT SHE
SAID?



CAN YOU
EVEN
BELIEVE
THAT?

SHE KNEW
DAMN
WELL THAT
I LIKED
HIM!



What is
that?

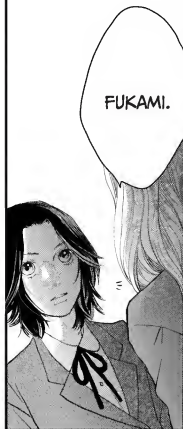
It's like
a black
mist...

I WILL
NEVER...

...
FORGIVE
HER FOR
THIS!



What's
going
on?!



FUKAMI.



That mist
is gone...



What...

...is this
orb?



Nobara.



AND
IT'S ALL
BECAUSE
OF YOU.

YOU DID
IT ALL BY
YOURSELF.

I HAD
NOTHING
TO DO
WITH IT.



THANK
YOU.

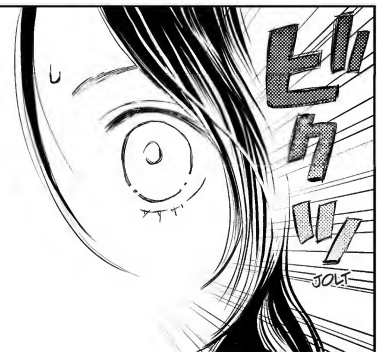
I'M NOT A
BIT PLAYER
ANYMORE.



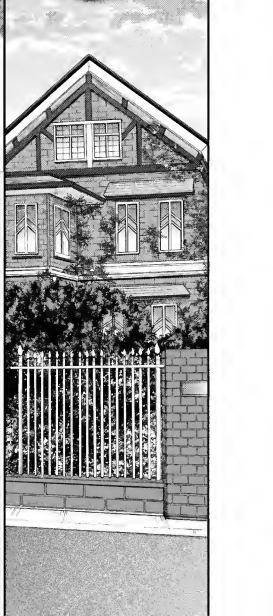
The mist
must have
turned
into this
black
orb...



But...
what is
it?



Isn't it
fun to toy
with their
hearts?





He's

...

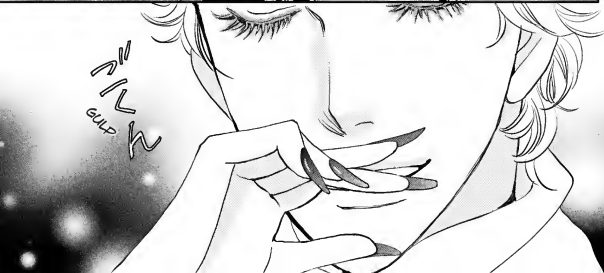
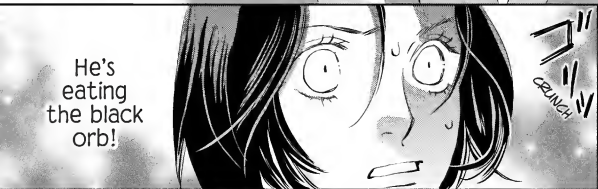


...
behind
me.



IT'S
YOUR 16TH
BIRTHDAY.

THE TIME
HAS COME
AT LAST.





I'M WHAT
YOU
PEOPLE
CALL...

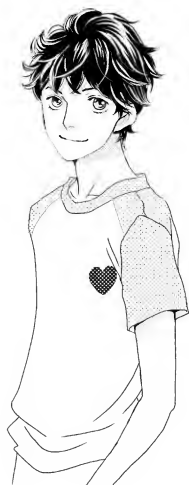
...A
DEMON.

His
shadow...

WHAT
...

...ARE
YOU?

... has
wings!





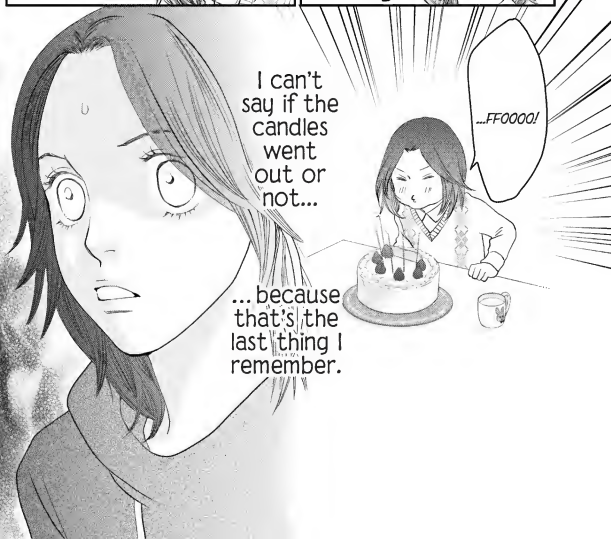


The last
birthday I
remember
celebrating
...



It was right
here in the
loft, with my
grandfather.
He'd always
been good
to me.

...
is my
fifth.



And today,
on my 16th
birthday...

... a man
stands
before me,
claiming
to be a
demon.

WELL,
THAT'S
UNDER-
STANDABLE.

I GUESS
YOU'VE
NEVER
MET A
DEMON
BEFORE,
HMM?

HEH HEH
HEH

That
voice!

WHAT'S
WRONG,
NOBARA?

HAVE I
LEFT YOU
SPEECHLESS?



IT'S YOU,
ISN'T IT?

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO'S BEEN
TALKING TO
ME SINCE I
WAS A KID!

That's the
voice...

...I've been
hearing in my
head all this
time!



IT TOOK
A GREAT
MANY YEARS
BEFORE I WAS
FINALLY ABLE
TO MANIFEST
MYSELF TO YOU
THREE MONTHS
AGO.

THAT'S
RIGHT!

RECOGN-
IZED MY
VOICE, DID
YOU?



HOLD
IT!

WAIT
RIGHT
THERE!

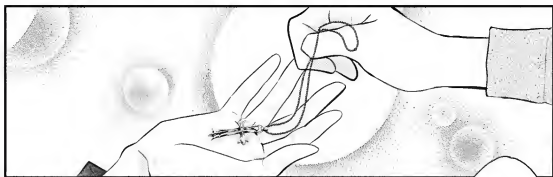
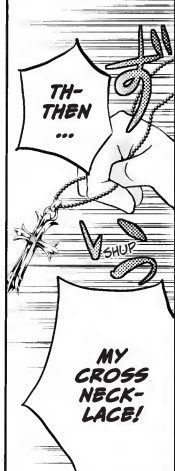


AND NOW,
AT LONG
LAST...

...I CAN
APPEAR
BEFORE
YOU IN
CORPOREAL
FORM.

YOU CAN'T
IMAGINE HOW
GOOD THIS
FEELS!







TH-THERE
HAS TO BE
SOMETHING

...

OH!
HOLY
WATER!

DO GIVE
IT A REST
ALREADY.



がっ
つ
み
...
GLOOM...

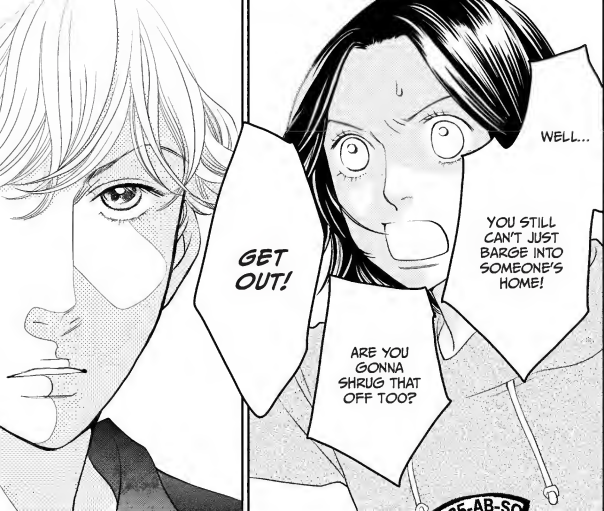
The Portrait
of Elegance

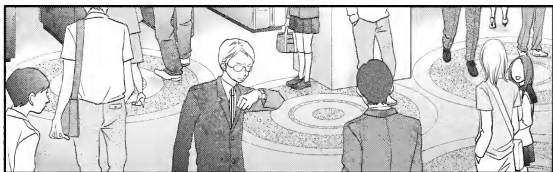
優
雅



NOTHING IS
GOING TO
WORK.

DEMONS HAVE NO
SUCH AVERSIONS.
THAT'S ALL NONSENSE
YOU HUMANS MADE UP.







THEIR
THOUGHTS
?

YOU
SHOULD
BE ABLE
...

... TO
MANAGE
THAT BY
NOW.



NO-
BARA.

LISTEN
TO THEIR
THOUGHTS.

Until now,
I've been
the only
who could
see him.

Now I guess
everyone
can.



I WISH
MY BOSS
WOULD
JUST
DIE...

I SHOULD
DUMP
HIM
ALREADY
...

He's so
cute

This
sucks

Cross

Blah

I WISH
I COULD
QUIT
MY
JOB...

WHAT
A PAIN
IN THE
ASS...



HERE.

LOOK AT
THIS.

WHOOOSH



OH...



IT'S
TIME...

That black
mist I saw
earlier...

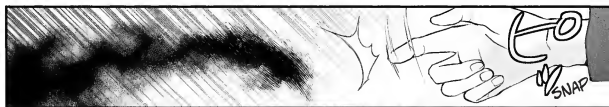
WHOOSH

...
NOBARA.

WHOOSH



WHOOOOOSH



SNAP

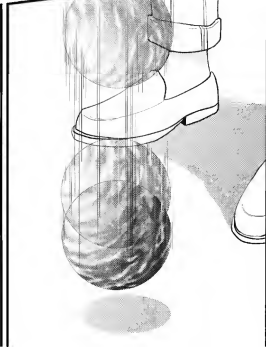
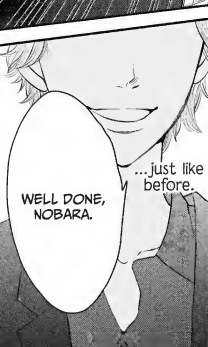
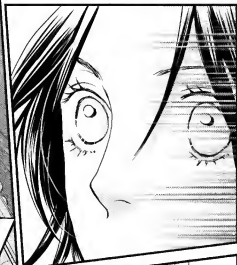


JUST
TOUCH IT.

BWAH!

IT'S
COMING
THIS
WAY?!

STOP
IT!





THESE
ORBS...

THEY'RE A
CRYSTAL-
LIZATION OF
NEGATIVE
FEELINGS.

HATRED,
BOREDOM,
GREED,
INDOLENCE,
JEALOUSY—
YOU NAME
IT.



TO MY
KIND, IT'S
OUR DAILY
BREAD.



WHAT
IS THIS
LUNATIC
SAYING
?!

Huh?

WHEN THE
MIST IS
FILTERED
THROUGH
YOUR
BODY...

...AN ORB
IS BORN.



I'm terrified.

They're shaking.

My legs ...



IF YOU WANT THOSE THINGS SO BAD...

YOU...

YOU CAN MAKE EM YOUR DAMN SELF!



ARE YOU INSANE?

WHY ON EARTH WOULD I HELP YOU DO THAT?



Anywhere.



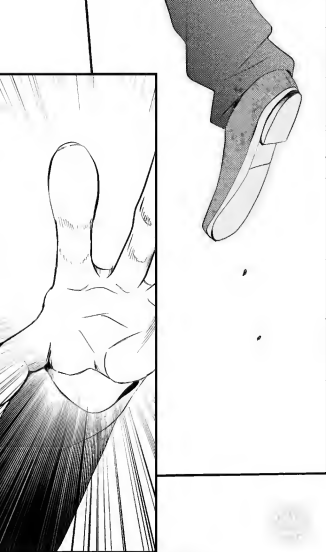
Far away.



Gotta get away.

But where?

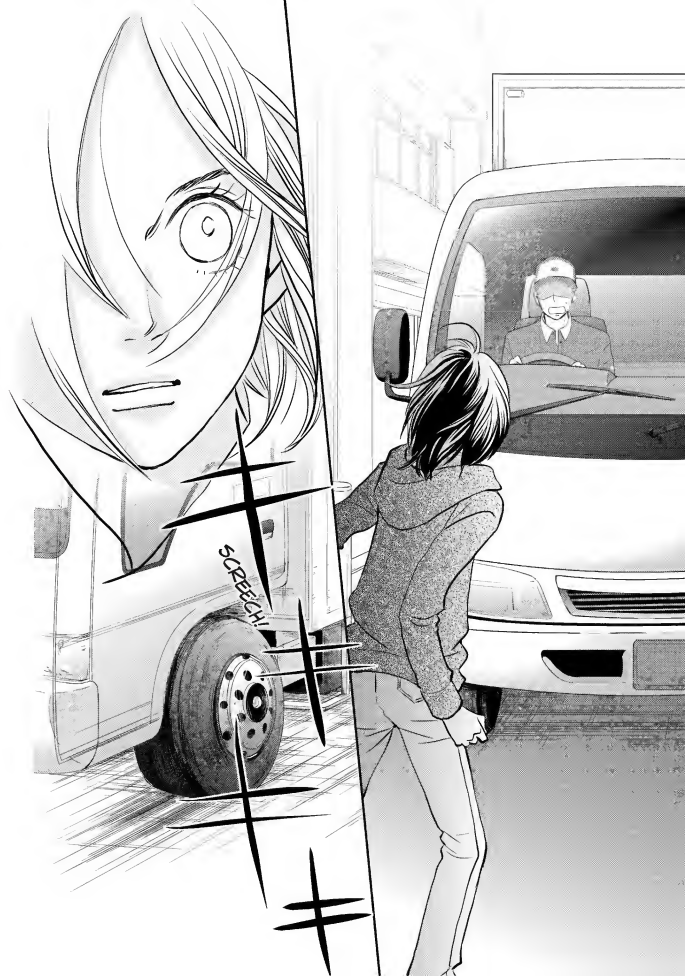
Push button to cross



I'm
dead.

Sixteen years
of a very
strange life...

...and then
a demon
does
me in.





NOBARA!

ONLY MY
GRANDPA
WAS WITH
ME.

MY
PARENTS
TOLD ME.

THEY SAID I
COLLAPSED
WHEN I TRIED
TO BLOW OUT
THE CANDLES.

NOBARA!

PLEASE!
SOMEBODY!

THAT'S
RIGHT.

YOUR
GRANDFATHER
WAS THE
ONE WHO
SUMMONED
ME.

TAKE ME
INSTEAD!

AN ANGEL!
A DEMON!
ANYONE!



But I'm
afraid...

Your
request
...

You
haven't
much
life
left.

I'll
grant
it.

Even
added
to hers,
it only
amounts
to 18
years.



NO!


I COULDN'T
BEAR FOR
HER TO DIE
SO YOUNG!

SHE... SHE'LL
DIE AT 18?



PLEASE!


THERE HAS
TO BE SOME
WAY TO
EXTEND IT!



Truly,
human
desperation
knows no
bounds.



HEH HEH
HEH



You've given
up your life
and you're
still trying to
save her.



SO I'M
SUPPOSED
TO DO THAT
IN EXCHANGE
FOR MY
LIFE?



WHAT A
BRIGHT
YOUNG LADY
YOU ARE.



YOU
MEAN...



...THE
POWER
TO
MAKE
THOSE
ORBS?



Very
well.



On her
16th
birthday,



I'll give
her a
special
power...



I'm still living with my cats, as always!



Cats grow wiser with age, just like we do.

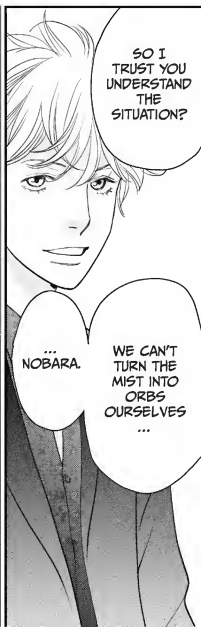
Tora used to cry at my bedside until I'd get up to make breakfast.

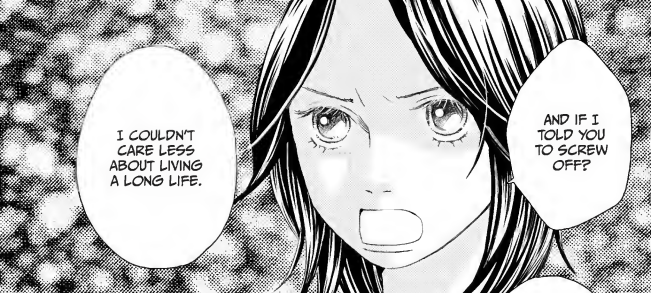


But now he just quietly steps on my face.



This is how I wake up to draw the manga every day.





I COULDN'T
CARE LESS
ABOUT LIVING
A LONG LIFE.

AND IF I
TOLD YOU
TO SCREW
OFF?



GRANDPA
WAS THE
ONLY ONE
WHO EVER
GAVE A CRAP
ABOUT ME,
AND HE'S
GONE.

SCHOOL'S
A CHORE,
I HAVE NO
FRIENDS...

MY OWN
PARENTS WANT
NOTHING TO
DO WITH ME.



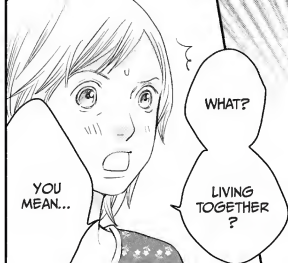
To hell
with
this.



DO YOUR
WORST.

I'VE GOT NO
LOVE FOR
THIS LIFE.









DAMN
IT!

Fwoosh

オオ

オオ

オオ



...

WHAT...?

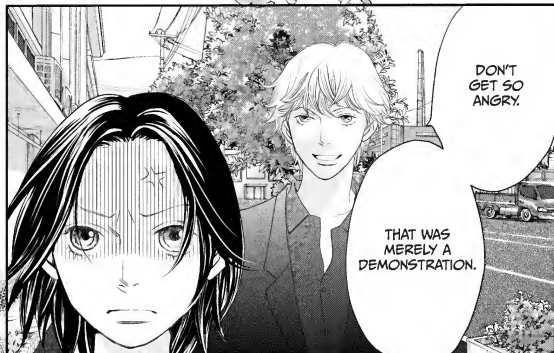


クニ...

SNIFF...



WHAT WAS I
JUST DOING?



DON'T
GET SO
ANGRY.

THAT WAS
MERELY A
DEMONSTRATION.

Seriously...

What a
birthday, huh?

I had such a
boring life...

A manga panel showing a girl with long dark hair shouting at a boy with short light-colored hair. The boy is wearing a dark jacket and is looking away. The girl is wearing a light-colored shirt and is pointing her finger at him.

**YOU'RE A
MONSTER!**

...and now
a demon
is laughing
beside me.

あはは
HEH HEH

NOW
TECHNICALLY,
THAT ISN'T
TRUE.

ハハ
HMPH

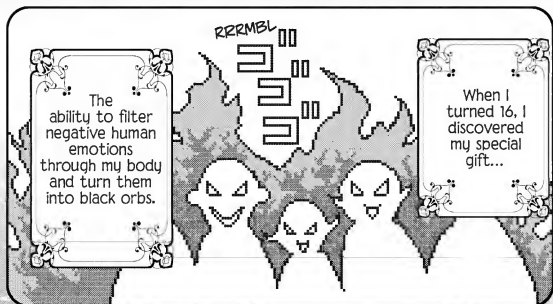


いはば 冠の 元

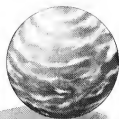
CROWN
OF
THORNS



case
3



...are
what
demons
eat.



And those
orbs...

LOOK
HOW
BEAUTIFUL
I'VE
BECOME.

... apparently
I'll have to
keep the
orbs coming.

In exchange
for extending
my life beyond
the two short
years I have
left...







**GET OUT
THERE AND
MAKE ME A
DAMN ORB!**



**IS
FUKAMI IN
HERE?**

**THROWING
PEOPLE OUT
OF THIRD-
FLOOR
WINDOWS...**

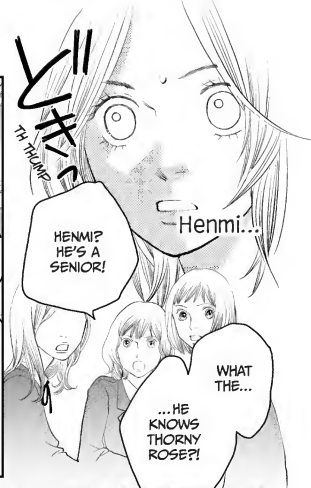
**HE
REALLY IS
OUT OF HIS
GODDAMN
MIND.**



This has to be about what happened to Ms. Henmi...

FUKAMI, YESTERDAY ...

I HEARD YOU RAN INTO MY MOM DOWN AT THE RIVER...



TH THUMP

Henmi...

HENMI? HE'S A SENIOR!

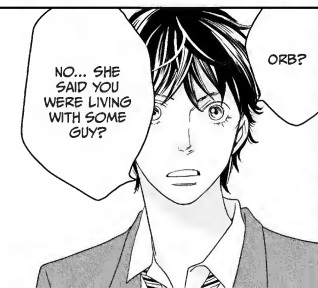
WHAT THE...

...HE KNOWS THORNY ROSE?!



YEAH, JUST... SURPRISED.

ABOUT THE ORB?



NO... SHE SAID YOU WERE LIVING WITH SOME GUY?

ORB?

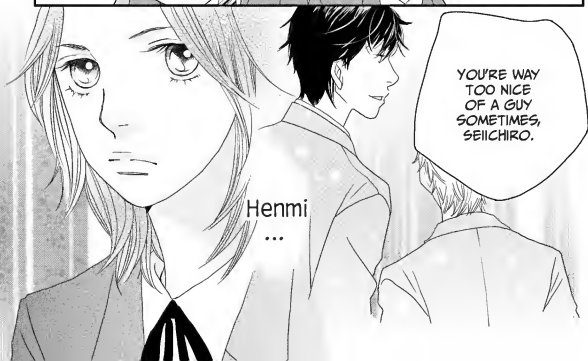


YEAH.

UMMM...

IS SHE OKAY?





Henmi
...

YOU'RE WAY
TOO NICE
OF A GUY
SOMETIMES,
SEIICHIRO.

This happened back in grade school too...

HENMI,
WHY ARE
YOU ALWAYS
HANGING OUT
WITH FUKAMI?

YEAH,
SHE'S SO
WEIRD.

Henmi was
always
surrounded by
other friends.
The exact
opposite of
me.

EVERYONE
NOTICES ME
WHEN I'M
WITH YOU.

WHY?

HENMI,
LISTEN.

Henmi
was the
light, and
I was the
shadow.

SO YOU
NEED TO
STOP.

I'M
FINE BY
MYSELF.

YOU NEED
TO STOP
WALKING
HOME WITH
ME.



I'LL TELL
THEM ALL
...

"BE NICER
TO FUKAMI!"



YES.

OKAY, I
UNDERSTAND.

I hated how
Henmi lit
me up like
a spotlight
when
we were
together.

I just wanted to
fade
into the
background
alone.



IS THIS
BECAUSE OF
WHAT THEY SAY
ABOUT YOU?



I'LL BE
RIGHT BACK,
OKAY?

WHAT?!

STOP!
STOP!



あ、みは、つらい、
おもいをしているんだあ

あ、みは、
いひめるなよ

Hey,
everyone,
be nice to
Fukami!

DON'T SAY
ANYTHING!

THEY'LL
THINK I TOLD
YOU TO!

Henmi
blurted it
out to the
whole class.

You're
hurting her
feelings!



But I'm
sure
relieved
that his
mom's
okay!

I'M NOT
SAYING
HE'S A BAD
GUY, OR
ANYTHING
...

ISN'T
HE?



Mean-
while,
Henmi
...

Stairs to
sainthood

... earned his
reputation as
the guardian
of the misfits.



I grew
more and
more
isolated.

Pathetic!

なに
てー
い
い
つ
た
る
か
い
い
ん
ど
い
よ
ね
え
え
You're
such a
whiner!



WHERE DID
YOU COME
FROM?!



What?

WHATEVER
HIS AIM, HE
HURT YOU.

THE ROAD TO
HELL IS PAVED
WITH GOOD
INTENTIONS.



THERE'S
NO NEED
TO BE SO
OBNOXIOUS
ABOUT IT.
SIGH...



WOW,
YOU'RE
A LITTLE
SLOW
ON THE
UPTAKE.

AND
YOU'RE
IN YOUR
PHYSICAL
FORM!

EVERY-
ONE CAN
SEE YOU!

**GET
OUT!
GET
OUT!**

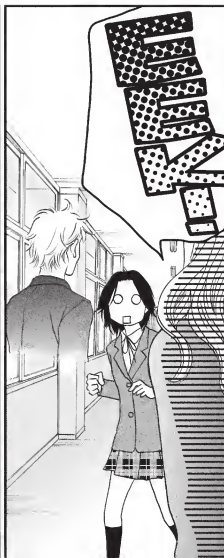


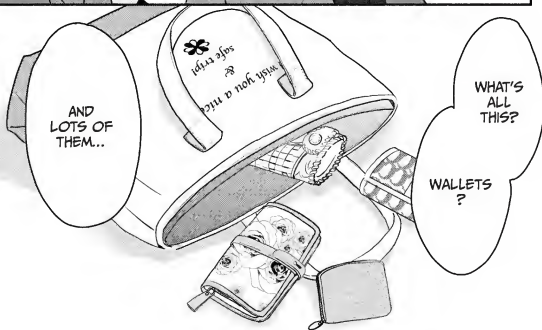
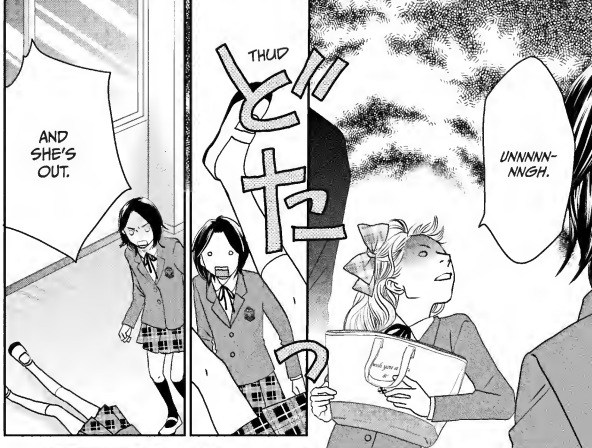
DIS...

DISAP-
PEARED...

YOU...

YOU'RE
HALF...





I just got back
from Hawaii

Aloha!

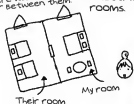


But something scary
happened there.



So each room had its
own entrance, but
there was a shared
door between them.

We had
connecting
rooms.



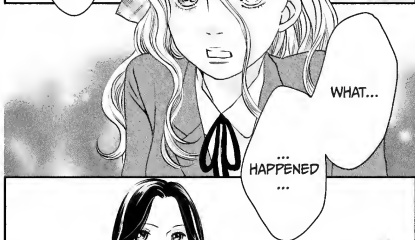
I was
sure I'd
left the
lights on
before
we went
out...



To be
continued

When I
opened
the door...

...the
lights
were
out. It
was pitch
dark.





DON'T
TELL
ANYONE!

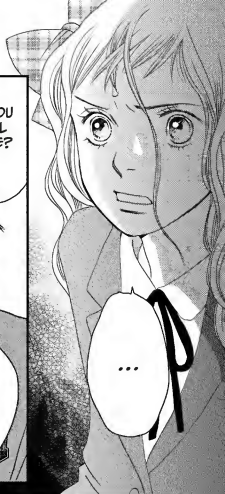
IF YOU
TELL
ANYONE
...HE'LL
NEVER
FORGIVE
ME!



DID YOU
STEAL
THESE?

PLEASE
...

THERE'S NO
WAY THEY
ALL BELONG
TO YOU.



...



GRIN
GRIN

に
に
こ
こ

WELL,
NOBARA
...

THIS
CERTAINLY
SOUNDS...
DELICIOUS.



"HE"?



HE
SAID HE
NEEDED
MONEY!

I PRIED
OPEN
SOME
LOCKERS
...

SO
I...



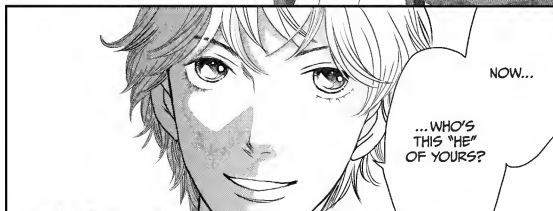
WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? LOOK!
HE HAS LEGS!

YES INDEED!
TWO LONG,
SPLENDID
LEGS!



THAT
MAN...

WEREN'T
HIS LEGS...
DISAPPEARING
?



NOW...

...WHO'S
THIS "HE"
OF YOURS?



I...

...CAN'T
LET THEM
STEAL HIM
FROM ME!

HE HAS A LOT
OF GIRLS,
AND THEY ALL
BRING HIM
THINGS...

AND HE'S
REALLY
COOL!

TAKERU
ETOH... HE'S
A JUNIOR.





WHY
WOULDN'T
I?

WHAT
?!

YOU'RE
SENDING
ME BY
MYSELF?

BEFORE
WAS JUST
A TRAINING
EXERCISE.



WHAT?

DON'T TELL
ME YOU'RE
SCARED?



...



YOU'LL
TOUCH THE
BLACK MIST
EMITTED
BY YOUR
TARGET...

COULDN'T
BE EASIER.

THE ORB
POPS
OUT, AND
YOU'RE
DONE.



IT'S JUST THAT
IF YOU COME
TOO, YOU'LL
GET THE ORB
SOONER.

LISTEN...

I DON'T
THINK YOU
UNDERSTAND
HOW THIS
WORKS.

OF
COURSE
NOT.

HE
DOESN'T
SCARE
ME.



I'M THE
MASTER HERE.
YOU'RE MY
RETRIEVER.

YOU'RE
ALIVE
BECAUSE
OF ME.



I POINT.
YOU FETCH.



I...
UNDER-
STAND
THAT.



THAT'S
THE
DEAL.

NOTHING
MORE,
NOTHING
LESS.

This
guy
pisses
me
off.

YOU DON'T
NEED TO BE
SO CONDE-
SCENDING.



Pisses.
Me. Off.

YOU WANT TO
BE CALLED
LUCIFER?



WELL,
I THINK I'M
GONNA CALL
YOU "LUCIO."

Who
the hell
does he
think he
is?

LUCIO
...?

He wants
an orb
or two?
Fine.

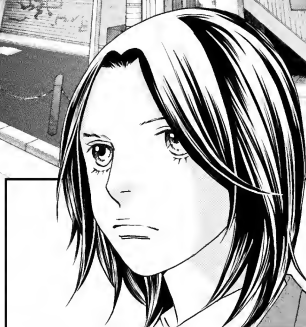
GRANDPA...

What-
ever.

But am I really
gonna spend the
rest of my life
taking orders
from him?

WHY?

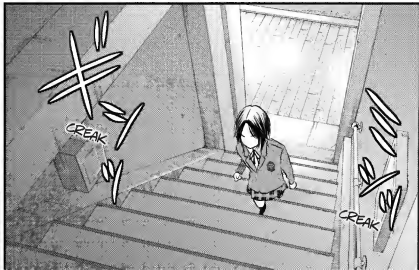
WHY DID YOU
MAKE A DEAL
WITH HIM?



HE HANGS OUT AT
AN ABANDONED
BUILDING ACROSS
FROM THE TRAIN
STATION.



I can
handle
this. No
problem.





WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

What could be scarier than living with a demon?

This is nothing.



I JUST WANT TO TALK WITH HIM.

TALK?



It'll be fine.

I'll just get the orb and get out.

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH TAKERU?



I'M LOOKING FOR TAKERU ETOH.

IS HE HERE?



GONNA
CONFESS
YOUR
UNDYING
LOVE?

GIVE IT
UP, GIRL.
TAKERU'S A
REAL BAD
GUY.



ALL
RIGHTY.

This
girl...

I'M NOT
HERE
FOR YOU
TWO.

WHERE'S
ETCHO?

I'LL CALL
HIM OVER.
WAIT RIGHT
THERE.

What
does
she
want?



COME
ON TAKERU,
PICK UP.

His
thoughts
...

Like little
tweets
from his
soul.

I'm lucky
that she
doesn't even
know what
I look like.

Well,
she's
not bad
looking.

Maybe I'll
do her in
the back
room.



THE ASSHOLE
WHO MAKES
GIRLS STEAL
WALLETS FOR
YOU?

YOU'RE HIM,
RIGHT?



It's
him.

He's
Takeru.



AND
WHO
ARE
YOU?

...



There's
the mist!

YOU
TRYING TO
PRANK ME,
GIRL?

...WHY
THE
DUMB
RUSE?

IF YOU
KNEW
WHO I
WAS...





カ!!
GRAB

GOT
HER!

HA

HA

HA

Damn
it...

LET...

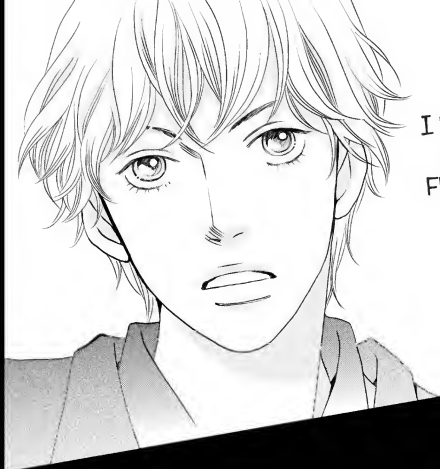
LET ME
GO!



SCREAM IF
YOU WANT.
NO ONE'S
GONNA
COME.



People can
be scarier
than any
demon...



I POINT.
YOU
FETCH.

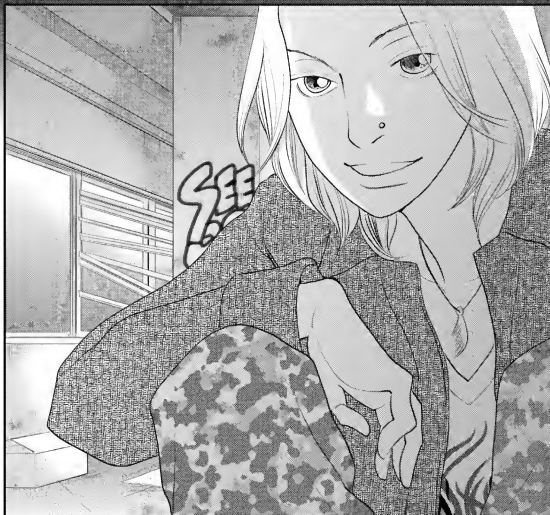
Damn
you,
Lucio!



いばの冠

CROWN
OF
THORNS

case
4





I
SUPPOSE
IF YOU
BROUGHT
ME MONEY
TOO...

...I
MIGHT BE
WILLING
TO LET
YOU GO?

SO WHAT
SHOULD WE
DO? MAYBE
YOU COULD
GIVE US SOME
SORT OF
INSURANCE?

BUT WE CAN'T
RISK YOU GOING
TO THE POLICE
ABOUT THIS, CAN
WE?



LIKE, WE
COULD
TAKE SOME
HUMILIATING
PICTURES
OF YOU...

...SO WE
COULD
SPREAD
EM ALL
OVER
SCHOOL.

OH, I'VE
GOT
A FEW
IDEAS
ABOUT
THAT.

HEH
HEH.

HEH.

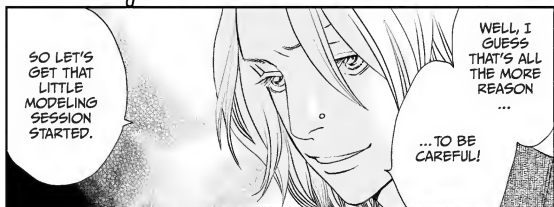
WHAT'S
SO DAMN
FUNNY?

AND YOU
THINK NAKED
PICTURES
ARE GONNA
SCARE ME?

YOU
THINK I'M
AFRAID OF
GARBAGE
LIKE YOU?

IT'S
JUST
THAT...

...I HAVE
A DEMON
CONTROLLING
MY LIFE.



I really
am
nuts...

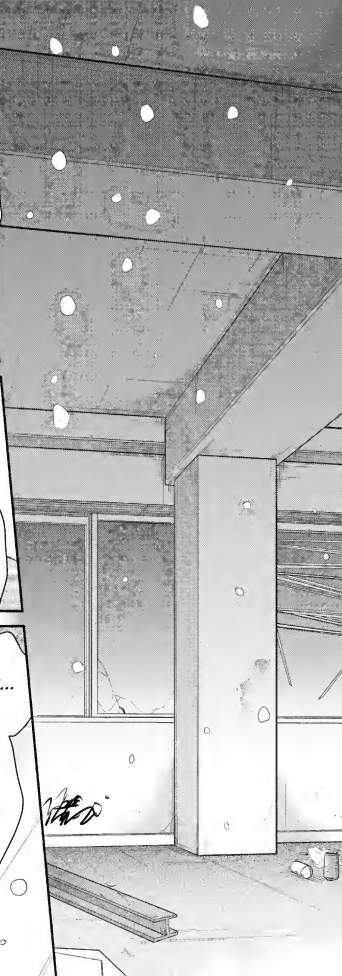
Maybe
he's
right.



START
STRIPPING!

ALL
RIGHT.





SNOW
...

MOUNTAINS
...?

WHAT
THE
HELL
...?

ビ

ヨ

オ

FWOOOSH

オ

オ







YOU'RE AN
AWFULLY HIGH-
MAINTENANCE
PET.

SHEESH.

THEN YOU
COME
MARCHING
IN WITH
YOUR WEIRD
SCENERY...

W-WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

I SAID I
COULD
HANDLE THIS
MYSELF!





WHAT?



"PLEASE
HELP ME."



NO? ALL
RIGHT. YOU
CAN GET
EATEN LIKE
YOUR TWO
LITTLE
FRIENDS.

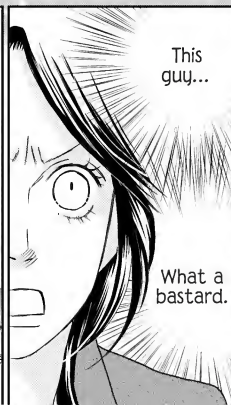
NO WAY. NO.



I CAN'T
HEAR
YOU.

Please
...

help
me.



This
guy...

What a
bastard.



ALL I
HAVE TO
DO IS
POINT.



GRRRR



I don't believe this.

OKAY NOW, AWAY WITH YOU. SHOO!



DYING...

...FROM THE WOLF BITES...

SO MUCH... PAIN...

What is up with this guy?



AAAH!

HUH?

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO THE
SNOW?

IT'S THAT
GUY FROM
THE SNOW!

MY
WOUNDS
ARE
GONE...



ERK!

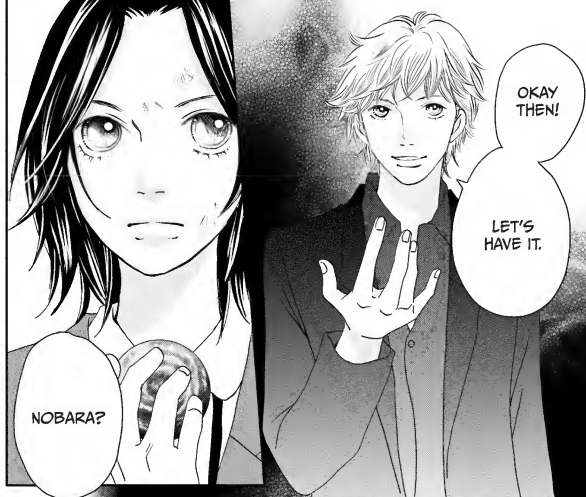
I WON'T!
I SWEAR
I WON'T!

I'M SO
SORRY!

...THE NEXT
TIME I'LL
LEAVE YOU ON
THAT MOUNTAIN
FOR REAL.

GENTLE-
MEN.

IF YOU
EVER TRY
ANYTHING
LIKE THIS
AGAIN...





OR I
WON'T
GIVE YOU
THIS.

STOP
CALLING
ME A
"RETRIEVER."



WHAT?



WE'RE
EQUAL
PARTNERS
IN THIS.

AND
THAT'S
HOW IT
HAS TO
BE.

...
BECAUSE
IT GETS
ME WHAT I
WANT.

I'LL
GET THE
ORBS YOU
WANT...



I said it.

IF YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE TO
JUMP AT YOUR
COMMAND, IT'S
NOT GONNA
BE ME.

GO AHEAD.
KILL ME IF
YOU WANT.



HEH.



CLEARLY
THEY DON'T
CALL YOU
THORNY
ROSE FOR
NOTHING.

FAIR
ENOUGH

...
...
PARTNER.

One
day...



When Lucio
appeared

...

One day,
this life
will be
taken
from me.

...in that
white snow
field...

...it felt
like the
world had
ended.

I can
feel it.

Is that
how my
life is
going to
end too?





IN BOOKS
AND MOVIES
AND STUFF,
YOU DEMONS
ARE ALWAYS
HUNDREDS OF
YEARS OLD,
RIGHT?

SO HOW
LONG HAVE
YOU BEEN
DOING THIS
SORT OF
THING?

HMM?



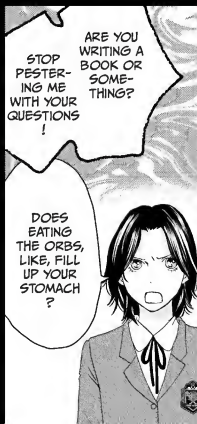
HEY,
LUCIO.

HOW
OLD ARE
YOU?

DON'T
EVER ASK
A DEMON
THAT.



YOU'RE NOT
THE TYPE
TO TAKE A
HINT, ARE
YOU?



STOP
PESTER-
ING ME
WITH YOUR
QUESTIONS
!

ARE YOU
WRITING A
BOOK OR
SOME-
THING?

DOES
EATING
THE ORBS,
LIKE, FILL
UP YOUR
STOMACH
?



ヒキ
URK

WHAT
DO THE
ORBS
TASTE
LIKE?

ABOUT
THAT
...



THAT'S
SLOPPY
WORK.

SO WHY DID
YOU BRING
BACK ONLY
ONE ORB,
WHEN THERE
WERE TWO
MEN?



HAVEN'T YOU
NOTICED
THAT SOME-
THING'S
CHANGED
...

...SINCE
WE FIRST
MET?



...

I WILL
TELL
YOU THIS
MUCH.



...

I
HAVEN'T
NOTICED
ANYTHING
!

HUH?

LIKE
WHAT?



I
HONESTLY
DON'T
KNOW!

SO
WHAT
IS IT?



MAYBE YOU
SHOULD
OPEN YOUR
EYES, THEN!



DON'T THEY
LOOK ANY
DIFFERENT
TO YOU?

...

THE
LUSTER
OF MY
HAIR.

MY
SKIN.



HE CAN'T
MEAN...

HUH?

WAIT...



YES,
PRECISELY.

**DON'T
READ MY
MIND!**



What he
said this
morning
...

That
?!

LOOK HOW
BEAUTIFUL
I'VE
BECOME.

会長

Chairman

社長

President

部長

Department Chief

課長

Manager

平社員

Employee

THE
HIERARCHY OF
DEMON SOCIETY
IS DETERMINED
BY THE BEAUTY
ACQUIRED FROM
NEGATIVE HUMAN
EMOTIONS.

I'VE
PREPARED
A CHART
THAT WILL
MAKE THIS
EASIER TO
UNDERSTAND.

DEMONS
WHO ATTAIN
THE RANK OF
CHAIRMAN ARE
SO BEAUTIFUL
THAT YOU
WOULDN'T
EVEN BE ABLE
TO PERCEIVE
THEIR PHYSICAL
FORMS.

I AM
MERELY
AN
EMPLOYEE.



EATING HUMAN
NEGATIVITY IS A
TIME-HONORED
TRADITION.

...I
HAVE TO
GATHER
ORBS
FOR YOU?

THIS
INSANITY
IS THE
REASON...

THIS...





WE'RE
NOT THE
ONES WHO
WILL DO
THAT. YOU
HUMANS
WILL!



IF SO,
RELAX.



TELL ME.
WERE YOU
EXPECTING
THAT OUR
GOAL WAS
TO DESTROY
HUMANITY?



NOBARA.

I
THINK YOU'VE
FIGURED
THIS OUT
YOURSELF
BY NOW,
BUT...



... CAN BE
SCARIER
THAN ANY
DEMON.

YOU
HUMANS...

SO IT'S
JUST AS
WELL THAT
YOU'RE
WORKING
FOR ME...

...PARTNER.

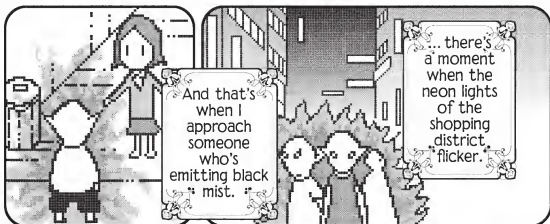




NO
WAY...

FUKAMI
?







WHERE ?

I DON'T
SEE
ANYONE.

HMM.
THAT'S
STRANGE.



WHAT
IS IT?

I
THINK...

...
THERE'S
SOMEONE
IN THE
GARDEN.



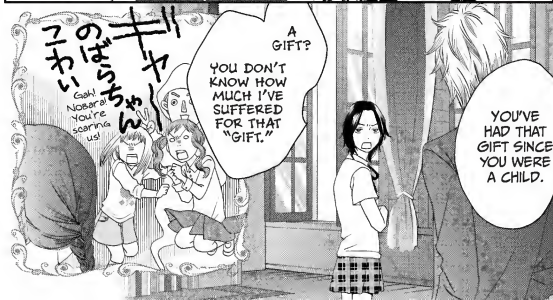
...

HMM.



MUST
BE ONE
OF THOSE
THINGS YOU
CAN SEE
THAT OTHER
PEOPLE
CAN'T.

HE WAS
THERE
JUST A
SECOND
AGO.

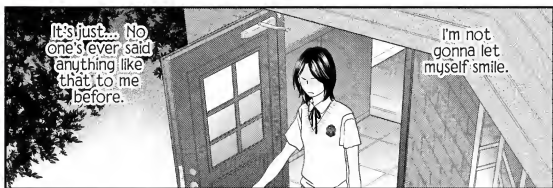
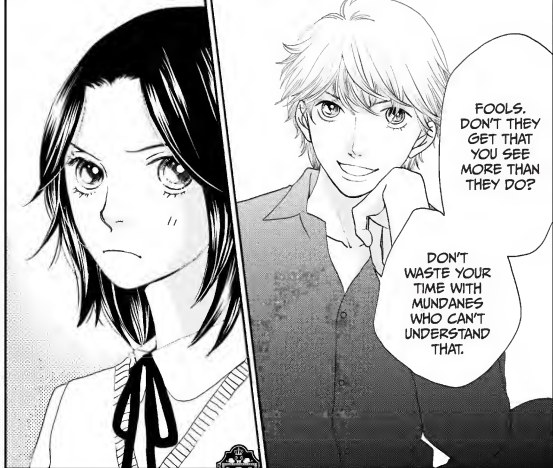


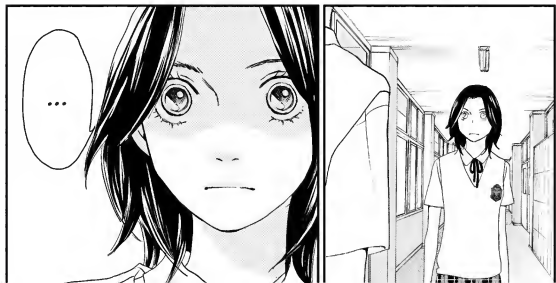
こわいばらちゃん
Gash! Nobara!
You're scaring
us!

A
GIFT?

YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW
MUCH I'VE
SUFFERED
FOR THAT
"GIFT."

YOU'VE
HAD THAT
GIFT SINCE
YOU WERE
A CHILD.









Huh.



TELL
YOU?

NOTHING
COMES TO
MIND...



I'LL LET
YOU BE,
THEN.

IS THAT
RIGHT
?

This feels
strangely
familiar.



WHAT'S
WITH THIS
DÉJÀ
VU...?

YOU'RE
ACTING
WEIRD.

LATER,
FUKAMI.



Getting all
Mr. Serious
on me like
that...

What's
Hermi's
deal?



Oh!

IS THERE
SOMETHING YOU'D
LIKE TO TELL ME?



FUKAMI.

Yeah,
I can't
tell
him
that.

WHAT?

SO, I'M
ACTUALLY
LIVING WITH
A DEMON
NOW...

"Is
there
some-
thing
you'd
like to
tell
me?"

AS
IF...



FUKAMI,
IS THERE
SOMETHING
YOU'D LIKE TO
TELL ME?



A girl in
our class
had a bear
pendant
she loved,
and it went
missing.

It
became
a huge
deal.



Now I
remember.

The bear
pendant
incident.



I had
no idea
what he
meant.

Henmi
asked
me
that.



I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE
EVEN—

STOP
IT!



WHAT?

DO YOU
KNOW
SOMETHING,
FUKAMI?



Some girls
saw him ask
me, and got
suspicious.

HEY...
HOLD
ON A
MINUTE.







Everyone assumed that Henmi had cried to protect me.

And without my saying a word, I became the prime suspect.



The culprit was never found.

The pendant was gone.

... a happy memory.



It's not...

...and hadn't burst into tears, I never would've been suspected.

If Henmi had never asked me that...

My Scary Hawaii Story, Continued



As I groped in the dark for the switch, I heard movement



Someone was there!



The man screamed too!



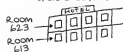
The man and I screaming



My friends' door wouldn't open

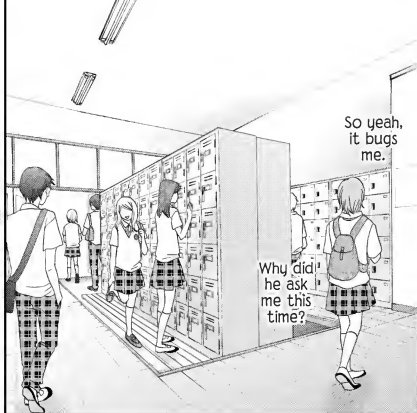


We'd gotten off on the wrong floor. The man must have been so surprised I apologized profusely.



But it's scary that two rooms so close would have the same key! Always lock your door!

The End



Why did he ask me this time?







SEIICHIRO
SAID
HE WAS
SORRY!



I SAID
I'M
FINE!

HEY,
CALM
DOWN!

WHAT'S
YOUR
PROBLEM
?



SORRY.

I WAS
JUST
WORRIED
ABOUT
YOU.



Yet again...



THAT'S
SO
RUDE!

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO
AMBUSHED
HIM!



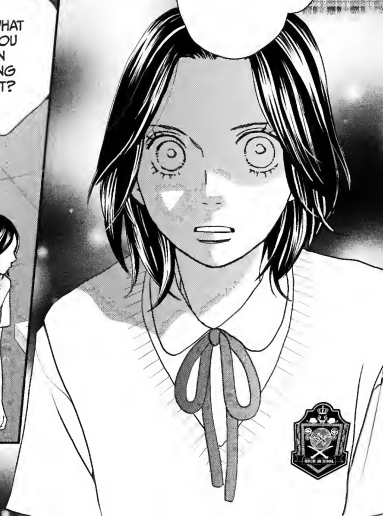
FUKAMI.

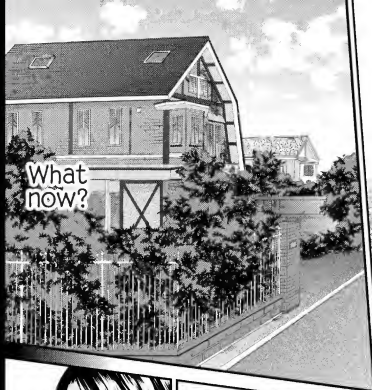


TO HELL
WITH
THIS.



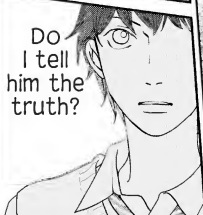
The Henmi
loop
begins.





What
now?

He saw
us.



Do
I tell
him the
truth?



I'll just tell
Lucio for
now.



He'll wipe
Henmi's
memory
for me.





THAT SMELL
...



Yeah, if
you like
weeds...

HUH?

IT REMINDS
ME OF AN
ENGLISH
GARDEN.

SHAAA 木

WOULD
YOU
MIND IF
I...

...CAME
INTO YOUR
HOUSE?

...he's
beautiful.

This
man...

It's wonderful.



INTO...
MY
HOUSE?

...

It's like he's not
even human.



YES.

INTO
YOUR
HOUSE.



NOBARA!

**DO NOT
INVITE HIM
IN!**





WAS THAT
GUY A
FRIEND OF
YOURS?

I'VE NEVER
HEARD YOU
SPEAK SO
LOUDLY
BEFORE.



HE'S
GONE.



NOBARA.

WHY WERE
YOU SO
ADAMANT I
NOT INVITE
HIM IN?



IS HE
ABOVE
YOU ON
THAT
HEIRARCHY
OF
YOURS?



YOU
MUSTN'T
EVER INVITE
HIM IN. NO
MATTER
WHAT.



RUINATION
...?



I MEAN, HE'S
BEAUTIFUL.
LIKE, I HAD
CHILLS.

THAT
MAN...

...IS A
RUINATION
DEMON.



...A DEMON
THEMSELVES.

...DEAD,
OR...

ANY HUMAN
HE TAKES
IN WILL
BECOME
ONE OF
TWO THINGS—

YII
SHIVER
L

No way...



BUT MY KIND
CAN'T ENTER
SOMEONE'S
DWELLING
WITHOUT AN
INVITATION.

JUST BE
CAREFUL.

That pure
white
skin...



THEN...
WHAT THE
HELL WAS
HE DOING
AT MY
HOUSE?

WELL...

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
HE WAS
AFTER.



OKAY.

Those
flawless
features
...



EVERYTHING
WILL BE
OKAY.

The way I
swooned when
I looked into
those eyes...





HEY...

IT'S
BECAUSE
THE ORBS
YOU BRING
IN ARE SO
VALUABLE.

Because
he actually
said
something
cool?

かっ
た
ん
な
ん
と
い
っ
た
か
ら
...?

ARE YOU
BLUSHING?



...IS
ABSURD.
DEMONS
DON'T
BLUSH.

TH-
THAT...



SO?
WHERE'S
THE DAY'S
HARVEST?



WHAT?!
YOU
DARE TO
RETURN
EMPTY-
HANDED?!

I GAVE IT
TO YOU THIS
MORNING,
REMEMBER
?



He is so
weird.

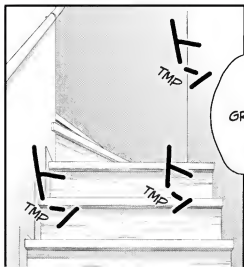
But I do
know he's
weird.

I don't
know if
he's my
friend
or my
enemy.

DAMN
IT!

YOU'RE
WORTH-
LESS!

...!



GREAT.

HI, DEAR.

DINNER'S
ALMOST
READY.



PRETTY
INTERESTING
DAY TODAY.

MAN, THE
LOOK
ON HER
FACE...

SHE
REALLY
HAS NO
CLUE AT
ALL.



TO
FUKAMI'S
PLACE?

SO...

...DID
YOU GO
THERE
TODAY?

I WENT
THERE.





A PITY
ONE OF MY
SUBORDINATES
GOT IN THE
WAY.





ARE THERE
A LOT OF
DEMONS
AROUND
HERE?

SO...



SERIOUSLY
?

SO WHEN
PEOPLE
TALK ABOUT
BEING
POSSESSED
BY
DEMONS...
THAT'S
LEGIT?

I
WOULDN'T
SAY
THERE'S
A
DECENT
AMOUNT.





AND WE CAN'T
APPROACH
THOSE WHO
ALREADY HAVE
A DEMON.



LUCIO...



THEN WHY
WOULD
HE COME
TO MY
HOUSE...?



You're so
sad!

70
PFFT!

**YOU'RE
TOTALLY
LETTING THIS
GUY PUSH YOU
AROUND!**



イヤア
おろせえ
Wah!
Put me
down!

YOU REALLY
TRY MY
NERVES
SOMETIMES.





URGH.

ARGGHH!



IT TOOK
YOU TOO
LONG.

IT... IT'S
DONE.

TODAY'S
ORB IS
DONE.



YOU NEED
TO WORK
HARDER.



IT'S
SMALL
AND THE
QUALITY
IS POOR.

BUT I PUT
EVERY-
THING I
HAD INTO
IT.



MUCH...
...
HARDER.



NOW...

MAKE ME
ANOTHER.

AFTER ALL,
YOU'RE A
REJECT WHO
CAN ONLY MAKE
ORBS FROM
YOURSELF.



YOU HAVE
TO DO BAD
THINGS.





PASSED
OUT, HAVE
WE?

YOU
REALLY ARE
WORTHLESS.

JUST
GARBAGE.

Good help
is so hard
to find.



I'VE NEVER
BELIEVED
THAT HENMI
WAS A GOOD
PERSON.

HE'S JUST
GOOD AT
APPEARING
TO BE A
GOOD
PERSON.



IF YOU'D
FIGURED OUT
HIS SECRET, I
BET YOU'D HAVE
HAD A MUCH
BETTER TIME AT
SCHOOL.

I
WONDER
HOW
EXACTLY
...

...ONE CAN
APPEAR TO
BE A GOOD
PERSON WHEN,
OBJECTIVELY,
THEY ARE
NOT.



INSTEAD,
YOU SPEAK
YOUR TRUE
MIND UNTIL
EVERYONE
HATES YOU.

LIKE I'D
EVER!

うそだな
And mind
your
own
business.





MOST HUMANS
CAN ONLY MAKE
THE ORBS OUT OF
THEIR OWN
EMISSIONS.



BRING
ME TEN
ORBS
TOMOR-
ROW!

Consider
it a
quota

YOU'RE
LIKE THE
WORLD'S
WORST
PIMP.

BUT I'VE
GOT A LONG
WAY TO GO
BEFORE I
REACH THE
NEXT LEVEL.
SO GET
BACK
TO WORK
!



THAT IS SO CREEPY!

I think
your
eye-
lashes
arew!

うっわ
キモい

YOU REALLY
HAVE GOTTEN
PRETTIER!

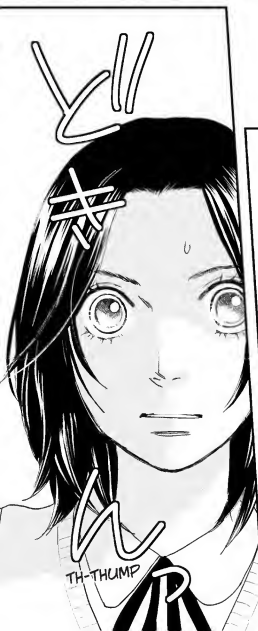
YOU
SEE?
YOU
SEE?



And weirder
still, that kind
of made me
happy.

It's
weird.

The only
person who
understands
me is a
demon.

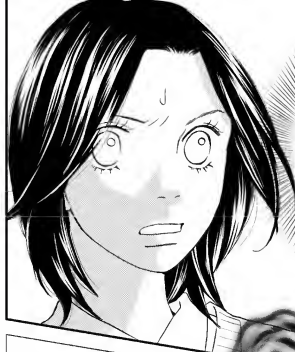


TH-THUMP



It's not like
I ever cared
if anyone
understood
me before...

TEN
ORBS!
WHO
IS HE
KIDDING
?



The man
from
yesterday
...



THAT
MAN IS A
RUINATION
DEMON.



HEY
THERE.



ANY HUMAN
HE TAKES
IN WILL
BECOME
ONE OF TWO
THINGS...

I'M
SORRY.

I DIDN'T
MEAN TO
FRIGHTEN
YOU
YESTERDAY.



His beauty
completely
transcends
that.

His eyes aren't
mere movie-
star eyes.

...A
DEMON
THEM-
SELVES.

ANY HUMAN
BECOMES
DEAD, OR...



How can
his smile
be so
pure?

Could
he really
be a
ruination
demon?!

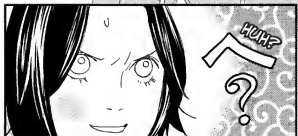
HA HA!
30
2

WHAT AN
INTER-
ESTING
PERSON
YOU ARE!

WAS WHAT
HE SAID
ABOUT ME
THAT BAD?

I BET
YOU STILL DON'T
KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT HIM, DO
YOU?

HE DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT HE'S
TALKING ABOUT.
HE'S STILL NEW
AT THIS.





HOW DID
SOMEONE
AS
TALENTED
AS YOU
END UP
WORKING
FOR A GUY
LIKE HIM?

ENJOYMENT
DOESN'T
REALLY
MATTER
TO ME.

I KNOW
YOU DON'T
LIKE IT.



I DON'T
SEE HOW
HE'S
WORTHY
OF YOU.

HE'S A
REJECT
THROUGH
AND
THROUGH.

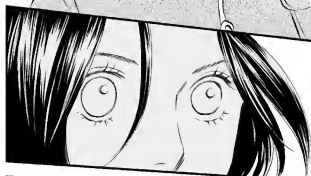


YOU
SHOULD
COME
WITH ME.

A LOSER
...?

NOBARA...

I CAN
OFFER YOU
MONEY,
POWER...



LOVE,
FRIENDSHIP...
WHATEVER
YOU DESIRE.



COME
WITH
ME...

...AND THIS
WORLD
WILL BE
YOURS.

YOU'VE BEEN
BY YOURSELF
FOR SO
LONG. YOU
MUST BE
LONELY.





YOU
SHOULD
ASK HIM HIS
REAL NAME
SOMETIME.



LUCIO?



IS THAT
WHAT YOU
CALL HIM?



I'M SURE
YOU'LL FIND
THE ANSWER
INTERESTING.

CALL ME
WHATEVER
YOU LIKE.

DEMON.

SOMETHING
APPROPRIATE
FOR A DEMON,
LIKE LUCIFER
OR DAMIAN?



DO YOU
HAVE A
NAME?

Greetings.

I wrote that scary story, but other than that night, my trip to Hawaii was a lot of fun.

A stylish and adorable duo



Maki Minami Matsutaka

We've known each other for more than ten years.

"That's the first time we've heard you scream!"

Is what they told me. I'm sure it was!



But Hawaii is wonderful. I'd love to go back!



Well, Crown of Thorns is scheduled to run for two volumes. So I'll see you again in Volume 2!

Thank you so much for reading!



Yoko Kamio

What did he mean by that?



Henmi.





HEY.



HOW
DID IT
FEEL...

Uh-oh.

...TO
FLY?

We still
haven't
done
anything
about
Henmi.



Hmm...

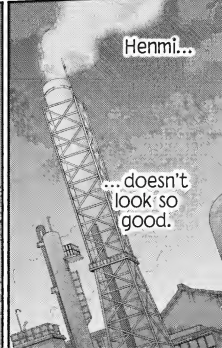
FUKAMI.

LET'S
TALK.



IT WAS
RIGHT
HERE,
WASN'T
IT?

THE
OTHER
NIGHT.



Henmi...

...doesn't
look so
good.



AND
YOU TWO
FLEW OFF
INTO THE
DARKNESS.

HE
SPREAD
OUT
WINGS
LIKE A
BAT.

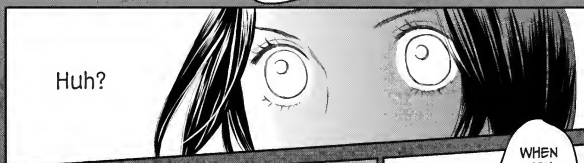


...NO ONE
WILL BELIEVE
YOU. THEY'LL
THINK IT
WAS JUST A
DREAM.

ALL RIGHT,
LISTEN.
EVEN IF YOU
DO TELL
SOMEONE...



SO
GO AHEAD
AND DO
WHATEVER
THE HELL YOU
WANT.





SORRY I
DIDN'T SAY
ANYTHING.

No
way.

I
REALLY
DO.

IT'S THE
PENDANT THAT
GIRL IN OUR
CLASS LOST.
IT WAS A
WHOLE BIG
THING.



DO YOU
REMEMBER
THIS?

Henmi
has a
demon
?

I USED YOU
IN ALL SORTS
OF WAYS TO
BUILD UP THAT
REPUTATION.



THEY
SUSPECTED
YOU, AND I
DEFENDED
YOU.

I BUILT UP
A LOT OF
GOOD-WILL
FROM THAT.



I WAS HOPING
WE COULD
LET BYGONES
BE BYGONES,
AND TALK
SHOP A BIT.

I'M
REALLY
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

I HAD NO
IDEA THAT
WE HAD SO
MUCH IN
COMMON!



...FOR
MAKING
THOSE
ORBS?

LIKE, YOU
GOT ANY
TRICKS...

I'm
shocked.
I'm... speechless.



LOTS,
HUH? MAN,
I COULD
NEVER DO
THAT.

IT'D
PROBABLY
KILL ME,
MAKING
A BUNCH
EVERY
NIGHT.



NO. NOT
REALLY.

ALTHOUGH
HE ASKS
ME TO
BRING HIM
LOTS OF
THEM.



MAKING
THOSE
THINGS
TOTALLY
WIPES ME
OUT.

DOES YOUR
DEMON GIVE
YOU A QUOTA
TOO?



HUH?

YOU
DON'T?

I'VE
GOTTEN
REALLY
GOOD AT
IT!



EVERY
NIGHT
...?

YOU...
MAKE
THEM?

FROM
YOUR-
SELF?



I MADE
THREE
OF EM
ONCE.

ALL IN
ONE
NIGHT!



SURE,
I'M...



HENMI
...

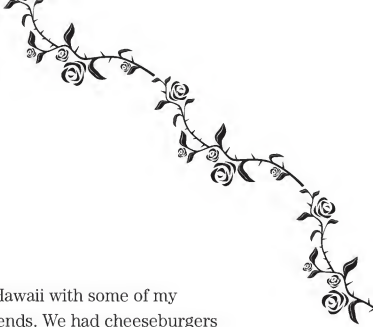
YOU
LOOK
REALLY
PALE.
ARE YOU
OKAY?



HENMI?

To be continued





I went to Hawaii with some of my
manga artist friends. We had cheeseburgers
three days in a row, and ate plenty of pizza
and French fries too. When I got back to
Japan, I'd gained almost seven pounds!
Getting fat is easy. Losing weight is hard.
I really regret it now.

YOKO KAMIO

Yoko Kamio made her manga debut in 1986 with *HATACHINO MAMADE MATTEIRU* (Waiting Until 20). Her works since include *SUKI SUKI DAISUKI* (I Really, Really Like You), and *MARY-SAN NO HITSUJI* (Mary's Lamb).

Following its release, *HANA YORI DANGO* (Boys Over Flowers) broke sales records by becoming the first shojo manga series to sell over 61 million copies in Japan, making the series the best-selling shojo manga in Japan. The series went on to win the 1996 Shogakukan Comic Award in the Girls Preferred Division.

Crown of Thorns

VOLUME 1
SHOJO BEAT EDITION

STORY AND ART BY
Yoko Kamio

ENGLISH TRANSLATION & ADAPTATION **Casey Loe**
TOUCH-UP ART & LETTERING **Evan Waldinger**
DESIGN **Shawn Carrico**
EDITOR **Pancha Diaz**

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